The houses were all built on the same pattern, only some being taller, wider and of better quality wood and thatch than others. 342

Facing the street in line, each house had a verandah running all along its face, and one step took you up from this into the main room of the house. As you entered, this room extended right up to the roof which sloped very steeply down to its eaves, but about twelve feet in, where the roof was just high enough, a platform upper storey was built, looking over a balustrade into the main room below. This platform storey ended where the sloping roof again became too low at the back. The back portion reaching to the height of the roof was used for kitchen and washing rooms. By this time, in the row of houses containing ours, the ground had sloped down to the creek, and the kitchen was continued as a bamboo platform raised high above the mud on piles.

Grandmother, who had become among the wealthiest in the village, had made enlargements and adaptations within these lines. Her house was wider, with the clearing up of an adjacent house. It contained four door spaces in its face, each door space being a uniform seven feet in width throughout the village. The main floor was of fine polished teak boards, the part below the platform storey was walled off into a bedroom which was very badly ventilated and lighted, the back portion was cleared of all washing rooms and made into a large airy kitchen about 30 feet square, and the platform behind was extended right over the water's edge because we had bought a mooring site further up. On this bamboo platform two hatches were put as bathrooms, containing commodes in the European style, whereas other households walked to the common latrines in the first clearing beyond the street.

The people of Ye lived chiefly by the produce of their gardens, the richer ones like Grandmother sending out to big towns their durians, coconuts, areca nuts, or fish and oysters from the sea, the poorer ones vending fish and vegetables daily around the town, making thatch roofing out of *dani* (nipah) leaves, acting as boatmen up and down the creek, helping to work the gardens and paddy-fields of other families. 244 226 463

My grandmother's household during these years consisted of herself, two aunts, one widow and one spinster, an uncle next to my father in age, my young Uncle Pyant and various cousins, one, two and three wombs removed from us. My elder uncle, Uncle Thet Hnan, had never been out of Ye; after going through the monastery he had worked in the gardens instead of going to an English-teaching school. It gave us an uncanny feeling to see him so like my father in build and general appearance and so dissimilar from him in speech, thought and habits. He now owned gardens up at Chaung-bya, and had five children all of whom had been brought up in Ye. My three boy cousins had been 592

[Lat Ye - Analyst]

592 sent to stay with us at various times and were sent to schools which taught English, but nothing would persuade them to take any interest in studies. My cousin Nyein Maung, whom I liked very much, could never bear to keep a shirt on, which was why he was always to be found with only a longyi tucked around his loins playing chinlon or helping boatmen with their canoes, when he should have been sitting fully clothed in a class-room.

[601] My young Uncle Pyant, whom we called U-Ngè, small Uncle, had 693 passed his B.A. and his law degree, and returned to Ye in preference to 177 a more modern life in a larger town. He walled off one doorway's space ,64 from the main room of the house and filled it with bookcases, a big desk and chairs for visitors. Outside this room my Uncle Pyant put up a sign saying: *"A-htet tan shaynay gyi:* Advocate and Higher Grade Pleader," and within a very short time became the lawyer of the whole village; but so great was his attachment to this consultation-living-room, which had nothing in common with the rest of Ye, that he relinquished all cases whose developing complexities led client and lawyer to a higher court in Moulmein.

592 Grandmother had gardens about ten miles up the creek from Ye.
• 244 These contained coconuts, durians and areca nuts grown over about
276 fifty acres for commercial disposal. Around the bungalow in the centre
427 of the garden there grew mangosteen, rambutan, pomeloes and pineapples for eating on a large-scale, clumps of bamboos, a coffee tree, tobacco plants, capsicum, lime and citron trees, lemon grass, and vegetables of all kinds to serve the needs of the bungalow and the household in town. My aunts with one young male relative took turns to live at the garden and help the family that was hired to look after it permanently. It was a dangerous life in these plantations as dacoities were very frequent.
[501] The produce was taken down to Ye in a succession of graceful narrow boats shaped out of single tree trunks. The durians and coconuts were
[447] sold straight away to traders who travelled between Moulmein and Ye for this purpose. The areca nuts were first dried on a bamboo attic made by an extension of the platform upper storey of the house until it met the back slope of the roof. When they were dried the whole family gathered around in the back kitchen and removed the husks with blunted nutcrackers, leaving the smooth nut to be sold.

244 With the rice from the paddy-land on the opposite bank, fruits,
262 vegetables and spices from the garden, rolling their cheroots with a mix-
226 ture containing tobacco in leaves shed by the areca trees in the garden,
438 and grinding their own coffee berries, my aunts and grandmother only
296 needed to buy a little fish and meat for their daily consumption. This they could not provide themselves owing to the Buddhist law against

taking life. Only the hardened ones of the village, *ta-nga-thès*, drew and netted in the wealth of fish around Ye, and the theoretical condemnation in which their profession was held absolved all good Buddhists from any sin in eating the fruits of their labours. My aunts bought vast quantities of fish for salting and drying. This cured fish supplied our yearly needs as well as theirs. They also bought prawns to press into a paste called *ngapi*, in this case *seinsa* ngapi, which forms the basis of all our flavouring and condiments. As soon as the ta-nga-thè came up with his boatloads of prawns they were spread out on rough bamboo mats and sunned on the big platform behind the house. When they were fairly dried, my aunts, with a helper or two from the village, mashed up the prawns by hand, throwing in vast quantities of salt as they worked. The mess was left in the sun for a few days, being stirred every now and again. By this time it had turned into a grey-black paste, more or less smooth, smelling most pungent and rotten to foreigners but *hmway-dè*, fragrant, to us, and tasting like a concentrate of anchovy. This paste is stored in small glazed earthenware jars. It is used to flavour all meat and vegetables dishes, or is fried or pounded with other ingredients to provide condiments for the meal. The Tenasserim coast is the chief source of seinsa ngapi in Burma, the big towns of Tavoy and Mergui supplying towns in Upper Burma as well. The large amounts of salt needed come from the valuable salt fields in this area which produce about 6,000 tons annually.

It can be imagined what excitement a holiday at Ye caused us in our growing years, and even my mother's admonitions that we were to behave in accordance with strict Burmese ideas which prevailed at Ye rather than the un-Burmese habits acquired at school did not dampen our excitement. We were then at English-speaking schools where we had adopted the habit of calling each other by name. The eldest of my young sisters Mya Mya, is seven years younger than I am, but when she went to school I had only two sisters left who called me respectfully, *Ma-Ma Gyi*, elder sister, and by the time the youngest was at school there was no Ma Ma Gyi left in the family. The tradition of the younger ones fetching and carrying for the elder had also sadly deteriorated.

At meals, my mother had not kept up the custom of helping the eldest person present with a portion of every dish before it was open to the rest of the company. Before we went to Ye, therefore, my mother gathered us around her and told us how we were to behave so as to give our grandmother and aunts great pleasure in our visit and no rude shocks. "Now don't forget, *the-mi-to*, my daughters, you will all three call your sister Big-Elder-Sister; you, Pusu, are to call Mya Mya Middle-Elder-Sister, and Aye Little-Elder-Sister. In fact you should

2:Scott G-5 (1870's-1909)1910 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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These personal examples furnished by the teacher of neh'ban and the Law himself have only served to emphasise what is seen on the admission of every new member to the holy assembly. One of the articles with which, in addition to his dress and begging-bowl, every postulant must provide himself, is a strainer, without using which he must drink no water. The object is, of course, to prevent him from destroying life in the shape of the small animalcula to be found in water. Some zealous and scientific proselytiser endeavoured, by the use of microscopes, to persuade the people that this was of no avail, seeing that even in the strained water there was abundance of animal life; but a council decided that, provided the water had been filtered, if the ascetic could detect nothing living with his unaided eyes he was at liberty to drink the water without incurring blood-guiltiness. The attacks of science on Buddhism failed as completely as the efforts of most missionaries.

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The mingled pity and dislike with which professional hunters and fishermen, whose occupation implies the regular taking of life, are viewed by Buddhists, is well known, and makes itself evident in the fact that the villains in most plays are hunters. Fishermen are perhaps not so much decried—possibly on account of the plea brought forward on their behalf, that the fish die of themselves, being taken out of the water, and not through any direct action of their captors. It is in connection with fish, however, that one of the most curious national works of merit takes place annually—furnishing, like all Burmese festivals, occasion for much fun and frolic.

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The violence of the rain during the five or six months of the south-west monsoon floods the country. Not only do the rivers, which in many places rise regularly as much as thirty or forty feet above their hot-weather level—not only do they overflow their banks, and make wide seas of the neighbouring flat lands, but great lakes spring up everywhere. These are gradually stocked with fish of all kinds, most of which, by the sudden fall of the water, are cut off from all chance of retreat to the large rivers, where alone there is safety. Steadily the water goes down, the hot sun sucks up the pools, till at last the end seems to be come. The river

14: Brant E-5 (1949-50) 1954 APl Burma
Burmese AP4

II

MAKING A LIVING

Occupations

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The occupational pattern in Tadagale is a highly diversified one. There are thirty-eight principal gainful occupations in which a total of 341 individuals are engaged. A large proportion of these people have secondary and even tertiary pursuits at which they spend part of their time in order to round out a living. The following table shows the outstanding principal occupations in order of frequency.

Table II

Principal Occupations of Villagers

Occupation	No.
Gardener	52
Bus operator (driver, spare)	44
Paddy cultivator	43
Field laborer	38
Dairy farmer	26
Prepared foods seller	20
Urban laborer	19
Trader (middleman)	17
Shopkeeper	15

Some of the other principal occupations, of lesser frequency, are carpenter, fisherman, casual laborer, cowherd, woodcutter, and seamstress.

1. Gardening. The leading mode of making a living is truck gardening. The gardens are located on small patches of ground adjoining dwellings, and range in size from tiny plots up to perhaps 3000 square feet. They are cultivated intensively, four crops a year being usual, and six crops not unknown. The crops include gourds, cucumbers, mustard, cabbage, cauliflower, lettuce, radishes and spinach. 244 ●

For all households, the garden supplies the family with the many vegetables that form an indispensable part of the various Burmese curries. Many gardens produce a surplus which is sold in nearby town bazaars or in the larger markets of Rangoon. The trend has been for gardening to become increasingly important as a source of income in recent years, particularly during the period of disturbed conditions in Burma. These conditions have seriously impeded the normal flow of fresh vegetables and fruits to Rangoon from more distant points; thus the people of Tadagale have been provided with an opportunity to secure high prices for almost all the vegetables they can supply. 244 178 443 438

244 Garden cultivation is quite simple. Hand tools, such as steel mattocks, rakes and hoes, which are obtained from Rangoon, are employed to prepare the soil. Cattle or water buffalo excrement is mixed with water to a thin consistency and poured from bamboo-spouted metal buckets over the ground. (The use of human excrement as a fertilizer, common in China and Japan, is not practiced in Burma.) During the monsoon season there is, of course, no problem of irrigation, but during the hot and dry seasons the gardens must be watered frequently. This task is often performed by young boys, who draw water from the wells and apply it to the gardens. The work of picking the matured crops and preparing them for transport to market is commonly done by female members of the household.

243 2. Paddy Cultivation. The principal occupation of forty-three persons is cultivation of paddy. This category is here defined to include individuals who own or rent land on which they cultivate paddy, as distinct from persons who work on a wage basis in the paddy cultivation of others. The latter are referred to in this report as field laborers.

243 162 427 178 Of the thirty-four paddy land holdings on which we have data, twenty-nine are rented and five are owned by the cultivators. All but one of these holdings is under twenty acres. This high ratio of renters to owners, as well as the small number of paddy cultivators relative to the total number of gainfully occupied villagers, is reflective of long-run trends in agriculture in this general area. Rural tenancy has been the outcome, in Lower Burma, of a long period of loss of land ownership to moneylenders, largely absentee, through inability of the cultivators to repay loans taken out at very high rates of interest. As tenancy has grown apace, individual cultivators have become discouraged with their small return for hard work. Accordingly, many have given up paddy cultivation altogether in favor of less arduous and relatively more rewarding occupations. However, this trend may be reversed, for there began in early 1951 actual implementation of the Land Nationalization Act of 1948, which provides for distribution of agricultural land to the cultivators on an individual ownership basis.

243 434 For the great majority of the paddy cultivators of Tadagale it is possible to eke out little more than subsistence from season to season. A few, after paying their hired labor, putting aside seed for the next year's planting, and filling the granary for home use, can realize some cash income by the sale of a small surplus of paddy. If the cultivator with a little surplus can possibly afford it, he holds the paddy until the hot season, when the market price is highest.

243 433 The average yield per acre in Tadagale, based on data for thirty cultivators for the harvest season 1948-49, is 19.8 bushels of paddy. This compares closely with the overall average figures for Burma. According to the Yearbook of Food and Agriculture for 1949 (U.N.-F.A.O.) the average yield per acre in Burma was 20 bushels.

243 437 In late March, the paddy fields of Tadagale are burned over, depositing an ash from any stubble remaining from the previous harvest. Sometime after the New Year celebration (which begins about April 13th and continues several days) the cultivators spread manure over their fields in preparation for the coming planting season. The manure is obtained from the Indian dairy farmers of the village in exchange for paddy stalk.

25: Ferrars E-5 (ca. 1890) 1901 AP1 Burma
Burmese AP4

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191. SWING NET (YAGWIN).

jack and several other fruits are roasted and eaten. Vegetables are regularly cultivated in the vicinity of large towns. In the villages very little trouble is taken with them. A bush or so of capsicum and a few plants of brinjal or tomato are set; pumpkins and gourds are trained over the roof or on arbours in front (Nos. 126, 414). The market vegetables are onions and garlic, many kinds of beans, fresh and dried, various tubers, yams, "sweet-potato," pumpkins, marrows, gourds, brinjals and tomatoes, *chimbáung*, *kyeppaung* and *kyemmauk*. Green maize is used as a vegetable. The cultivation of maize would admit of great extension in the *kwin* if there were a market for the grain. Green shoots culled from all sorts of wild herbs and trees are brought to market. The most substantial of these are bamboo shoots; they turn red by boiling as shellfish do. Black pepper and cardamom occur wild in Burma and are also cultivated, but not extensively. Turmeric and ginger are cultivated, as well as anise, caraway and coriander. Cinnamon and cloves are imported. Nutmeg is native to the evergreen forests of the south. European vegetables, raised by Chinese gardeners, are offered for sale in the markets of large towns. Potatoes are imported from India and have been grown with success in the Shan and Taung-ngu hills. European flowers have spread everywhere. Cut flowers are sold in the markets for toilet use. The rose has been cultivated in Burma for ages and is the flower most prized. No grafting is practised nor are any of the garden varieties known. The real floral wealth of Burma — its orchids (*thikkwabán*) — the people are only beginning to discover owing to the interest taken in them by strangers.

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192. FISH-TRAP (HNYON).